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## WORKINGMEN'S GRIEVANCES.

MR. MOODY.

THE concurrent wisdom and experience of many generations of men find expression in the proverb that "idleness is the mother of mischief." Had the sole object of our existence as a people been to furnish the strongest possible demonstration of the truth of the proverb, we could not have done it more effectually. How great has been our success may be seen by what has been accomplished here within the present century, mainly within the last half, during which period the people have been exempt from the social evils of the Old World.

The main effort of our industrial life has been to devise means to "save labor," *i. e.*, to get rid of the labor of man, not to lighten it; and to-day "labor-saving machinery" has increased man's power of production, in many directions, more than a hundred-fold—in the aggregate at least twenty-fold, but for our present purpose we will say ten. What has been the effect? Has the employment of machinery correspondingly benefited the great mass of society; has the condition of the laboring men and women of the country—the producers of all the wealth that exists—been made ten times better; or has it been the means of plundering and oppressing them until they have reached a depth of misery that should make the sun blush to look upon it? What are the facts? Let us look them squarely in the face.

We find that our vast public domain has largely gone into the hands of corporations of monopolists and speculators, by whom it is conveyed to other speculators and capitalists, foreign and domestic, in such quantities as may be desired; that though the *bona-fide* occupant or homestead farmer can obtain from the Government only three hundred and twenty acres, speculating capitalists may obtain millions of acres of the same lands from railroad corporations, upon which to plant their colonies of alien or other tenants, and establish

their huge "bonanza farms," or food factories. Though the census of 1880 gives the increase in the number of farms in our country at 1,348,922 for the last decade, an analysis of the report shows that of this number 1,024,701 were tenant farms, and 84,957 were bonanza farms, ranging from 500 to 500,000 or more acres each. The increase of independent homestead holdings during the same period was only 219,264, against the 1,109,658 bonanza and tenant farms. Here is an increase of more than five farm holdings owned by capitalists and speculators, as against one owned by practical farmers, who make their farms the homes of their households. But the bonanza farms are in no sense homes for any one. They are barred to population, and are worked solely by animal forces and machinery; and it is only by the power of machinery that they have been made possible. Other vast areas are occupied by great cattle ranges, also without homes or fixed population.

Thus, whilst we have hundreds of millions of acres of land, improved and unimproved, capable of furnishing reliable and constant employment, with homes and plenty for millions, under our old system of homestead farming, now, under our present system of capitalistic machine farming, the people who should be there, living in abundance and comfort, giving strength to the nation and vitality to business of every nature, are driven to towns and cities where, at best, they obtain only the most uncertain and inconstant employment, and where multitudes are found living in enforced idleness, and swarming in wretched tenements. Fully three-fourths of the population of the city of New York are living in from one to three small rooms to a family. There are blocks upon blocks in that city where the people are packed at the rate of 486,000 souls to the square mile. Whilst the extreme density of population in New York rises to 760 per acre, in London it stops at 222. At the close of 1883 the Board of Health of the City of New York reported the existence of 25,946 distinctive tenement houses, occupied by 907,000 souls, as estimated. What a contrast is here presented! Capital and Monopoly holding thousands upon thousands of square miles of territory, from which the people are excluded and driven to tenements in cities, where they are packed at the rate of 500,000 upon a single square mile.

An examination that I made of the records of the Board of Health of that city, for 1882, showed a mortality of 37,924 in a

population of 1,206,577, being at the rate of thirty-one in every thousand. The death-rate in the various wards ranged from fifty-seven per thousand in the Third Ward, to seventeen per thousand in the Fifteenth. In the Twenty-first Ward the rate was forty, in the Twelfth it was forty-one, and in the Nineteenth Ward forty-two, per thousand. The Third, Twelfth, Nineteenth, and Twenty-first Wards have the highest population density; but in the Fifteenth Ward, where there is a less amount of crowding than in any other, though it is by no means wholly exempt, the death-rate falls to a lower point than in any other entire ward.

But in that portion of the city extending from the Fifteenth Ward northward, to and about Central Park, between the Third and Seventh Avenues, which is altogether occupied by the residences of the rich, where tenement houses and want are unknown, and the most ample space, air, and comfort are provided for all, the rate of mortality must fall below twelve per thousand. Therefore it is fair to assume that in New York twelve per thousand is the death-rate of comfort, whilst all above that rate, or nineteen per thousand, is the mortality of destitution. This gives 22,925 as the number of those who are yearly destroyed by want in one city. The 23,000 thus annually sacrificed to Moloch are as clearly the victims of the war that wealth wages against society, as are the slain found upon the field of battle victims of a conflict of arms. The horrors here pointed out are not confined to the city of New York, but exist, more or less modified, in every city and town in our country.

The results of the employment of machinery in agriculture are repeated in every industry that requires force. All the old methods of production have been supplanted; domestic and individual industries can no longer be sustained. In every handicraft has machinery taken the place of muscle; and concentrated capital is still pressing forward to occupy those portions of this country, and of the globe, that it has not yet possessed. Under the stimulus of competition, mills, factories, furnaces, forges, and shops have been multiplied and increased in capacity far beyond the economic ability of the people to consume the product; and to-day we find fully one-half of our great work-shops either idle or running on short time, and the markets glutted with products for which there is no real demand. During the past year there were reported nearly

10,000 commercial failures in the United States. During the last ten years the number of failures has been upward of 75,000. Of the industrial failures no record is kept; but their number must fully equal those in trade. The effect of all these operations upon the labor and employments of man has been most disastrous.

Before the war of the rebellion, in consequence of the industrial revolution that had then only begun, multitudes of laborers had been thrown into idleness in all parts of the Northern States, and everywhere were heard their cries of distress and demands for work. When the war opened, the Government filled its armies with nearly two millions of men, and furnished all the required material and subsistence of war without in the least diminishing the normal industries, but, on the contrary, largely stimulating and developing them. During the war our mechanical powers were largely increased, and industrial prosperity everywhere abounded. There were no idlers. But at its close three millions of workers, with their vast increase of productive power, were thrown back upon the normal industries of the nation, without occupation and with no demand for their services. This was the beginning of the idleness and competition that now exist among the workingmen of the country; and since that time the idlers have been more than doubled, as has also the power of machinery.

To-day, throughout our whole country,—on the plains and in the mountains; in the densest populations and on the most advanced frontiers; in town, country, and mining-camp, are found armies of homeless wanderers, that can be numbered only by hundreds of thousands, if not by millions, vainly seeking work, begging or stealing their subsistence wherever they can find it, and rapidly sinking to the condition of the most callous vagabondage and crime. And among those who are now doing the work of the country, assured and constant employment is the exception, whilst uncertain and inconstant work is the rule.

Under the fierce competition for employment that everywhere exists, wages and salaries are declining, whilst the number of the unemployed becomes greater. Want and misery crowd upon all sides. We have innumerable institutions and associations throughout the country, organized for the sole purpose of furnishing employment to the poor and the idle, and almost fabulous amounts are by them expended in their work. But in spite

of all such efforts the distress increases. Nightly, the police stations in our cities are filled to overflowing with the destitute. Thus, after fifty years of strenuous effort to substitute machinery for muscle,—to make of man an idler that a comparatively non-consuming power may do his labor,—we have reached the terrible condition of things here described. All these great mechanical changes and social movements have been absolutely coincident, and certainly stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect.

These are some of the elements of the labor problem; but they involve all the great problems of life, and challenge the most earnest attention of economists. Yet by them they are almost wholly ignored, and the workingman who ventures to discuss these matters is derisively called “a labor reformer.” Our learned economists who are still teaching the fallacies of the feudal ages, in face of the facts here presented, insist that the condition of the workingmen of our country has been greatly improved; that it is better than ever before, and still improving. Some deny that labor-saving machinery has any tendency to “reduce the amount of labor expended,” but insist that “the very reverse is the case.” To such the only answer that can be made is to point to the facts. But facts they do not want. Speculations and abstractions are their capital; they desire no other.

Others declare that when the workingman is driven by machinery from the production of the necessities of life, he has only to turn his attention to the production of luxuries for the rich to find employment to the end of time. Can there be anything more absurd than the supposition that the production of luxuries for a few hundred or thousand plutocrats could furnish employment for our idle millions? Pray, upon what meat do our Cæsars feed that it should require such hosts to hunt it? And the matchless sophistry of the idea! Such suggestions betray how difficult it is for the popular economist to grasp the situation. Machinery is as important a factor in the production of silks, laces, and velvets, of carriages and carpets, in the making of watches and pianos, and in the working of gold and silver and polishing of gems, as in the growing of wheat or making of shoes; and there is here the same tendency to overproduction and glut of markets and idleness as is found in the production of food and clothing. Of all this our sophists can get the

evidence by visiting the places where articles of luxury are manufactured.

So in England, machinery is doing in manufactures the work that it has done here. But, though it has as yet been but little used in agriculture there, the small farmers of England are also being supplanted by machinery, and the rural populations driven to the cities. But when the policy of evictions and consolidation of estates to be worked by machinery has become general, the English will have a better understanding of the social effects of "labor-saving machinery" than they have at present. That nation has been unwontedly startled by some facts recently developed concerning these matters, and particularly in the metropolis, where the story of "Outcast London" has stirred up the whole people, Parliament included. Yet the crowding and consequent misery in that city is less than one-third as great as in New York, as already shown. But there, as in this country, the economists are prepared to show that the condition of that people has vastly improved in all particulars, and is still improving. Mr. Giffen is one of the latest champions of that view. But unfortunately for him, his statistics are largely discredited by Englishmen at home, and absolutely disproved by Mr. Porter.

Manifestly, it is only by the monstrous perversion of what should be man's greatest blessing that all these evils have come upon us. As man's power to supply his material wants has been increased, his condition should have been improved; he should possess in a larger measure the comforts of life with less labor. And especially is this apparent when it is considered that however great may be the increase in the power of production, there can be no increase in the power of consumption. Nor is it in the power of man to invent a new want. All that man can do is to fill the margin between destitution and abundance—between want and comfort—a margin sufficiently wide for human exertion. And not until all who are dependent upon labor for subsistence and comfort are brought into assured employment can there be reasonable hope of improvement. Cheapness, in the commercial sense, is not a social necessity. In that sense cheapness and poverty are inseparable, and behind every cheap product may be seen stalking the skeleton of want.

By the disregard of these self-evident principles the masses have been crushed, and a class small in number, but possessed of enormous wealth and unscrupulous in action, has been created,

who have seized and who hold all the natural resources of the country. Not only do they hold for speculation and plunder our national domain, swallowing up and destroying the small proprietors and covering the land with tenant and bonanza farms, but they destroy our forests, drain our oil-lands, and monopolize the coal of our mines. They control all the highways and means of travel and transportation throughout the country. They also hold in their hands and control all the avenues and means of communication, whether of business or pleasure, with the single exception of the post-office; and even the mails cannot be made useful to either people or Government except by favor of our plutocratic highwaymen. They have seized and they control all the machinery, material, and products of every industry. No man can travel, or work, or eat, or sleep, without paying tribute to the all-pervading tyranny of capital. For the first time in man's existence has the condition been reached when individual industries could not be sustained because of the combinations of capital and monopoly that are everywhere encountered.

Nearly one thousand years ago the Norman adventurer, William the Conqueror, invaded England, became its master, and divided the lands among the cut-throats who followed his fortunes. Five hundred years later, England's Eighth Henry despoiled the Church of her lands, and conferred them, with patents of nobility, upon the minions who ministered to his passions. But in neither case was there a general plundering of the people's industries by those royal robbers. And nowhere within the present area of civilization, during the last thousand years, has the track of an army of invasion or the progress of conquest been marked by such complete and systematic spoliation of the masses of a people, and monopolization of all the resources of life, as has signalized the pillage of the people of the United States by capitalists, land robbers, monopolists, and plunderers of every name and nature.

In comparison with this plutocratic class, our petty thieves, robbers, and murderers are harmless. The latter class spends its force in stealing a loaf of bread, robbing an occasional traveler, or cutting an individual throat. But the plutocratic class systematically steals the subsistence alike of strong men and weak women and children. They rob and starve communities; they kill and destroy nations.



The statutes of every State in the Union, as well as of the General Government, are burdened with provisions for the lding up and protection of property, of capital, of monopoly, speculation, and of trade. But in the ponderous tomes containing the laws supposed to have been enacted for the protection of society and its chief interests, there is not one guaranteeing to man the first and greatest of all inalienable rights, the right of the laborer to all the fruits of his toil, and protecting that right from the encroachments and robberies of tyrannous capital. To-day, labor has no rights that capital is bound to respect.

Hence it is that the workingmen of our country, living in the midst of these conditions, and feeling the hands of the oppressors heavy upon them, day by day seeing the rich grow richer, whilst their own condition as steadily and surely goes from bad to worse, recognize the conflict that exists, and naturally seek for some kind of mutual protection. If they pursue unwise methods, and oftentimes do themselves serious injury, it certainly is not because of any dereliction of duty on the part of our learned economists, who weary the world by their constant babble of the law of supply and demand, the relations of capital and labor, the Malthusian doctrine, etc., that has richly earned for them the distinguished honor of being teachers of "the Dismal Science." They never approach the changed and changing conditions of real life until they are aroused by some strike, or other manifestation of distress and unrest, when they rush out and scour the world to find other laborers whose conditions are worse than are those of our own work-people. Having found them, they invite our workmen to consider how much better is their state, and how exceeding thankful and contented they should be. From them come no practical suggestions or inquiries calculated to help the solution of the great problem before us, but rather a constant effort to prevent discussion and the disclosure of facts.

In the last Census Act, Congress directed that the condition of labor should be inquired into, and provided the machinery and ample means for its thorough and satisfactory examination. A noted economist was put in charge. The census was taken. Capital and wealth were magnificently, though it may be fallaciously, shown up. But labor had not a word. And so of the multitudes of homeless wanderers, without work or fixed habita-

tion, who fill the country, but are not even enumerated as a portion of our population. Thus, for another ten years, the Government and people must wait for official data of the most important matters in life.

Most certainly our plutocratic teachers of political economy are not the princes in whom the people can put their trust. Must we wait for another social earthquake to awaken our people?

WILLIAM GODWIN MOODY.

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PROF. LAUGHLIN.

ACCEPTANCE of the proposition that, as the rich grow richer the poor necessarily grow poorer, is often made the test of true friendship for the laborer. But the opposite belief is also consistent with the warmest interest in the workingman's condition. The question is a large one, and we here attempt to discuss only one—but a prominent and distinctive one—of the grievances alleged by the labor reformers,\* namely, the effects of labor-saving machinery. The existing stagnation in the iron and woollen industries, in which machinery is largely used, is at once seized upon to prove that, while competition on the part of the laborer for employment is steadily increasing, the introduction of new appliances which dispense with human hands is as steadily lessening the demand for labor, and consequently lowering wages; and that the outlook is the more gloomy because this tendency is general in all industries. As touching the future of the workingman, this question deserves respectful and judicial consideration.

Passing by the actual facts as to the growth of large estates in the West and the abuses in our public land system, in regard to which the poorer classes certainly have ground of complaint, the use of labor-saving machinery in agriculture, as distinct from other industries, demands separate treatment. The acquisition of means by which the cost of producing what every laborer consumes is lessened, would, on the face of it, seem peculiarly desirable. Indeed, it cannot be otherwise. It is an economic law, based on physical facts, that after a certain density of population is reached the cost of grain tends to rise; so that every advance in the arts and sciences by which more can be

\* "Land and Labor," William Godwin Moody. 1883.

grown for the same labor, or the same with less labor, is to be eagerly welcomed. To this it will be objected, however, that the direct means of getting a living is through the receipt of wages; that the process above described throws men out of employment in agriculture; and that they have no occupation to which they may turn where the same cause is not operating. And, although cheapened food is admitted to be beneficial, it is claimed that what holds true of food does not obtain in manufactures of goods not used by the workman; and that, if labor is dispensed with in making spokes for Jay Gould's carriage, the diminished cost of the millionaire's equipage is of no good to the hungry men. It will be better, then, to pass on to the effect of labor-saving devices in the production, not of food alone, but of all goods whose quantity can be increased indefinitely by use of sufficient labor and capital.

The idea that the more labor is released from producing the primal necessities the more can be devoted to the production of articles of comfort and luxury, and that all can be employed, is a difficult one to grasp, and needs elucidation. When men in one locality or industry find a re-adjustment taking place, they command our deep sympathy and kindly assistance; but when they thereupon assert that all things have gone wrong everywhere else, they act as did Henny Penny when the pea fell on her head and she thought the sky was falling. Especially is it foolish when the falling pea typifies cheapened cost of food. Henny Penny was so occupied in carrying news that she forgot to eat and enjoy the pea. No apology, then, need be given for stating a few elementary principles.

No community exists, or ever has existed, all of whose wants are satisfied. Civilization itself results in a differentiation and increase of new desires, for the satisfaction of which men are willing to exert themselves and make sacrifices. The wants of men being unlimited, the production of articles desired can go on indefinitely, provided only there exists the necessary labor and capital to produce them. The increase of goods by A is in effect a demand for the commodities A desires, but which B knows how to create; likewise, B's goods are his demand for A's product. Increased production is increased demand and the means for its satisfaction. But for production there must be labor, and a sufficient accumulation of capital, either owned by the laborer or advanced by some one else, on which the laborer

may subsist during the process of production. Capital, then (*i. e.*, wealth employed in production), is as necessary a condition of all increased product as labor itself. Like the two flanges of a hinge, one is useless without the other.

Since it is only by production that men get the things they want for their own consumption, it will follow that consumption is but the visible evidence of past production. It is axiomatic, then, to say that general production is the necessary correlative of general consumption. But consumption implies something more: it is not only direct evidence in itself that goods exist to be consumed, but it also implies the existence of the conditions under which the particular articles can be made; that is, the accumulation of machinery, buildings, tools, materials, and enough to pay laborers the wages by which they supply their wants. In other words, the consumption of articles is evidence not merely of demand for them, but that other wealth exists in the form of capital capable of producing them continuously. For example, when I see the use of costly luxuries, or when I am splashed by the showy carriage of a great railway king on the street, I am obliged by logic to reason as follows: Everything which makes up the large consumption of this rich man is an evidence of the employment of labor somewhere. It is a physical impossibility for Jay Gould or Mr. Vanderbilt to consume his whole income; in fact, a very small part indeed is really destroyed by personal consumption. Whatever is consumed in food, wine, grand houses, rich carpets, pianos, carriages, and dress, is a direct evidence that there exists a capital with a necessary plant to employ the labor which can produce these things. The spattering mud from the millionaire's carriage-wheels may excite my rage and envy, but as I stand there looking for employment, it says to me that there are somewhere factories for the manufacture of carriages and harness; that capital must be in existence to employ labor there. In this sense, the production of comforts, decencies, and luxuries forms a necessary part of present industry and of the employment of all labor; since in the present state of the arts the world can create more than the simple needs of life,—food, clothing, and shelter. With a given population, we are extracting from nature the means of our existence on this globe. Every gain by new processes which yield more for a given amount of human exertion is a boon to the whole human race; production is increased, and

the whole world is the wealthier. When our fathers were young, a sailing-vessel of ten hundred tons was a seven days' wonder; but now our Maine ship-yards turn out the same kind of craft of twenty-two hundred tons. Why is it? Because the cost of building, rigging, manning, and sailing one ship of twenty-two hundred tons is less per ton than that of two ships each of eleven hundred tons. Consequently, all owners of smaller ships find themselves in competition with better carrying instruments, which by the very fact of their size are capable of taking freight at a less rate. The smaller vessels now bring in a less return on the original cost; they are like bonds on which the interest has been lowered. Our great railways across the continent are operating distinctly as labor-saving machines, by bringing from the fertile prairie lands cheaper food than could before be produced by the eastern farmer. New England farms, consequently, have been thrown out of cultivation by competition with the superior western grain-fields, but the condition of every poor man in the populous cities of the sea-board has been improved by cheaper food. Yet, in spite of this competition, all New England is richer to-day by its other industries than when it attempted to grow grain. Labor-saving machinery, then, is a part of the progress of the world in gaining commodities of every kind on easier terms. But now, it is said, even if labor-saving devices do increase wealth, there is an unjust distribution, and the workingmen get no advantage from it. This, however, starts a very different question,—the wages problem,—on which a word may be said at the end; but the issue now to be discussed is simply whether labor-saving appliances drive men out of employment or not.

An increase of the total wealth makes possible an increase of the total capital (*i. e.*, wealth used in production of other things). The larger the outside circle, the larger the circle that can be drawn within it. The expectation of profit and the desire of men to increase their fortunes, decide how much of the total wealth is to be changed into capital; the margin between these last two is the amount consumed unproductively. On general grounds, then, increased production makes possible, and almost inevitable, an increase of the total capital, and so creates an increased demand for workmen. But how this goes on in detail may not be clear, and needs illustration; and, moreover, it will be said that, even if capital is increased, since it is shared

between materials, machinery, and wages, this does not hit the point, because as machinery constantly absorbs more, wages receive less, of capital, no matter what amount is in existence, nor how fast it grows. Take a concrete case. Suppose the labor of a community fully employed by its capital, and imagine farmer A to employ ten men. If, now, A discover a process in farming by which five men can be dispensed with, he will have the same product for a smaller expenditure of capital. In short, his labor-saving device has at the same time set free a portion of his capital. Where are the "other pursuits" in which the discharged five men can be employed? That depends on the direction taken by A's demand. A can now spend the income of this released capital on luxuries, and be as well off as before; he will, therefore, himself employ the five men in making pianos and carpets, or he will loan his capital to some one who has the managing ability to produce these goods for him. Thus as many men are employed as before, and the farmer has additional comforts by the use of labor-saving devices.

The point to be observed is that, disregarding sudden effects, labor-saving devices lessen the cost of production, and lessen the amount both of capital and labor necessary in that industry for making the supply desired. That is, under present conditions they generally throw capital as well as labor out of employment, unless an increased demand follows the cheapness, and then there is more demand for labor in the same industry. Now, if wants are absolutely unlimited, there are plenty of things to be produced by the displaced capital and labor; and if the displacement is general, it means simply that this will result in a greater increase of commodities acting on each other as reciprocal supply and demand. A brief illustration may make this clearer.

In case some change occurred affecting woolens, reducing the labor employed in supplying the present consumption of the United States, every one would get clothing cheaper, and so have more purchasing power in general out of former incomes. Each laborer would find that his expenses for clothing footed up less; then he would either increase his purchase of woolens or turn his demand to some new comfort and decency. What these shall be depends wholly on the nature of his desires; but they are evidenced through increased demand for certain things at retail stores, and through them by greater demand on the manufacturer or producer. But this increased demand would be utterly useless were there no capital ready to produce supply

for the increased wants. The very thing, however, which brought about the increased demand—the cheapened price of woollens—at the same time set at liberty capital and labor with which to satisfy it; and these result in increased production of those goods for which consumers show the more active demand. If capital exists to employ the labor, there will be channels enough for production, while human wants are unsatisfied; that is, until the crack of doom. Indeed, the increase of capital is so rapid, that for all practical purposes it is unnecessary to consider any friction arising from lack of it. Some ask the economist, triumphantly, to point out exactly what the “other pursuits” are in which the laborer can take refuge from labor-saving devices and find employment. First let these writers tell us the exact nature of the desires of the persons who have increased consuming power, and the direction of their demand will determine what the “other pursuits” are. In short, more commodities now exist in the world than could possibly have existed but for the increased production gained by labor-saving devices.

But an additional word should now be said as to agricultural products. It was stated above that increased produce from the land is gained only at an increasing cost. No matter how much improvement is made in the production of other things, the price of food tends to rise with increasing numbers. If this is inevitable, is it not at once clear that the laborer's consumption must be cheapened by labor-saving machinery wherever that is possible, in order to compensate him for the higher price of food? With food at the present price, a laborer's wages would buy him far less of other things, if these had not been cheapened by the advance of improvements in manufactures. In truth, the laborers owe their present bettered condition entirely to the causes just described.

It will be asked, at once, are the workingmen better off? To this the answer is distinctly that they are; the increased production has made possible the employment of the vast increase of population which has taken place, and even raised their scale of living. Thousands of men are engaged in industries now to one before labor-saving machinery was introduced. The following figures show the facts in the United States, as taken from the census of 1880:

	1850.	1880.	Percentage of increase.
Number of hands employed			
in manufactures.....	957,059	2,732,595	185
Amount wages paid.....	\$236,755,464	\$947,953,795	300

It is usual for some people to sneer at economic study, and say that it is all theoretical. Such facts as the above show clearly enough the truth of the position above explained, in that wages have increased far beyond the increase of workmen. It is perfectly just to demand that principles should be corroborated by facts, and for that purpose attention is invited to the following table of daily wages in the United States. No detailed statistics for wages seem to be at hand prior to 1860\*:

	1860.	1874.
Farm labor.....	\$0.86	\$1.17
“ .....	1.15	1.56
“ .....	.94	1.26
Blacksmiths.....	1.92	2.79
Brick-layers.....	2.30	3.33
Coopers.....	1.82	2.51
Carpenters.....	1.92	2.69
Painters .....	1.95	2.66
Plasterers .....	2.27	3.14
Shoe-makers.....	1.76	2.25
Stone-cutters.....	2.35	3.26
Tailors .....	1.82	2.57

Some allowance must be made in the figures of 1874 for the lowered value of paper money; but even then the table shows a marked increase of wages.

Now, if with higher wages prices of the goods consumed had remained the same, the laborer would have been much better off; yet a brief investigation shows that the laborers have gained doubly, because prices are less now by a considerable percentage, as will be seen by the annexed table, in which figures for 1840 are given to steady the inference somewhat when comparing with 1860 †:

Articles.	1840.	1860.	1880.
Wheat flour..... bbl..	\$5.29	\$5.19	\$4.13
Corn meal..... “ ..	3.22	3.57	2.80
Pork (mess)..... “ ..	14.30	17.98	10.14
Wheat..... bu..	1.05	1.49	1.25
Corn..... “ ..	.57	.74	.54
Coal (anth.)..... ton..	7.14	5.52	4.08
Molasses (N. O.)..... gal..	.26	.46	.37
Coffee (Rio)..... lb..	.10	.13	.12

\* Young, “Labor in Europe and America,” p. 739 *et seq.*

† “Report of the Director of the Mint, 1881,” pp. 50-60, and “Finance Report, 1863,” p. 376.



<i>Articles.</i>	1840.	1860.	1880.
Sugar (Cuba).....lb...	\$0.05	\$0.08	\$0.07
" (loaf)....." ..	.12	.09	.08
Tea (Y. H.)....." ..	.67	.25	.23
Tobacco....." ..	.08	.08	.07

This shows an unmistakable gain for the receivers of wages in the lowered price of commodities as compared with twenty years ago; and the three tables above certainly warrant the statement made, that the laborers in the United States are decidedly better off than they were some decades ago. It is a cheering sign, and every philanthropic man will read the account with pleasure. Some much more striking data are afforded by the accounts of a cotton-mill in New England, kept on the same system since 1828, and fortunately open to my inspection by the kindness of Mr. Edward Atkinson. They give the earliest reliable statistics yet published in regard to wages in the United States.

The average wages of all the operatives (comprising men, women, and fewer children than now) working thirteen hours a day were, in 1828, \$2.62 per week; the average wages of all female operatives to-day, working on similar fabrics ten hours a day, under vastly better sanitary conditions, both in factory and dwellings, are \$5.01 per week. The contrast would be still more favorable if men and boys were added, as in the statement for 1828. This has been accompanied by a decrease in the price of cloth, and with the exception of lumber and meat, no increase in the price of food. Moreover, the present operatives are less intelligent than those of 1828, the same class employed then being now engaged in higher occupations, at wages of \$8.00 or \$10.00 per week.

We happen to possess, moreover, the means of confirming this position, by figures of a similar import in regard to England\* in a recent address of Mr. Giffen, the well-known statistician of the British Board of Trade. He presents a statement to show, not merely an increase of wages, but an actual increase of consumption of common articles by each person in the United Kingdom. The diffusion of increased purchasing

\* After this paper was almost entirely written, and the conclusions drawn, the writer's attention was drawn to the report of Mr. Giffen's Inaugural Address as President of the London Statistical Society in the "London Times," November 20, 1883, which outlined some positions here established. Mr. Giffen's table is taken from the "Times" report.

power among the working classes shown by this table is very striking, when it is remembered that machinery is more extensively used in England than in any other country:

Articles.	1840.	1881.
Bacon and hams.....lbs..	0.01	13.93
Butter.....“..	1.05	6.36
Cheese.....“..	0.92	5.77
Currants and raisins.....“..	1.45	4.34
Eggs.....No..	3.63	21.65
Potatoes.....lbs..	0.01	12.85
Rice.....“..	0.90	16.32
Cocoa.....“..	0.08	0.31
Coffee.....“..	1.08	0.89
Corn, wheat, and wheat flour.....“..	42.47	216.92
Raw sugar.....“..	15.20	58.92
Refined sugar.....“..	<i>nil.</i>	8.44
Tea.....“..	1.22	4.58
Tobacco.....“..	0.86	1.41
Wine.....gals..	0.25	0.45
Spirits.....“..	0.97	1.08
Malt.....“..	1.59	1.91

The great increase in the general consumption of bacon, cheese, eggs, potatoes, rice, corn, wheat, sugar, and tea is a very marked feature, and shows very distinctly which classes have received the gain; while the relatively small increase in wine, spirits, and malt is a cheerful indication of better things. Mr. Giffen states that money wages have advanced from 30 to 100 per cent., while the hours of work have been diminished 20 per cent. The above increased consumption per head, therefore, is the more striking when we recall that the population of Great Britain has mounted from sixteen and one-half millions in 1831 to nearly thirty millions in 1881. The fact is also stated that in the last fifty years prices have not risen. Moreover, the expenditure of the Government for sanitary, educational, and public purposes had in this period actually added to the laborer's condition a gain of a nature which prolonged life and educated his children. The poorer classes, too, were able to save more: in 1831 there were 429,000 depositors in the savings banks, with an amount of £32 per head; in 1881, 4,140,000 with £19 per head, showing a most satisfactory increase in the number of small depositors.

These facts certainly show, with regard to England and the United States, that labor-saving appliances and increased pro-

duction have employed more labor and given the greater number better wages. All this, however, is not inconsistent with the undoubted existence of wretchedness and misery among the working classes. But it cannot be said that machinery is the cause of the distress, since it has, in fact, been a means of amelioration. The reasons why each receiver of wages has not a greater share of the vast increase of the world's wealth lie in causes other than the one matter of labor-saving devices. No one nostrum is going to cure everything. When the economist considers the situation impartially, he finds that capital is now receiving a less percentage of the product than in former years. If this is denied, it is only necessary to refer to the falling rate of interest on safe investments of capital; the evidence is all about us, and to prove it would be like proving that winter is cold. A widow with a small fortune gets less income on her capital than in years past. In the opinion of the writer, therefore, no conflict whatever exists between wages and capital under a system of industrial freedom. Under the head of "profit," the whole of which is popularly supposed to go to capital, the lion's share goes to the manager, or *entrepreneur*, as wages of superintendence. But he who works with his brain is as much a laborer as he who works with his hands; so, setting aside the interest, paid purely for capital, the remainder of the product is divided among the various classes of laborers, from the most ignorant and unskillful workman to the most capable executive manager at the top of the scale, and the remuneration rises as one ascends in the series. The highest wages are paid for skill in management, and not simply for the possession of capital.

It is, of course, unpopular to point out mistakes of the workingmen, and it requires the courage arising from a deep interest in their welfare to do so; but they too often overlook the fact that no one can himself gain wealth except by sacrifice, exertion, and skill, and that he who exhibits these qualities, be he white, black, or yellow, has a just right to enjoy the products of his exertion to the exclusion of every one else. There are those who are, perhaps unconsciously, influenced by the communistic feeling that any one man is as good as any other, economically speaking; that one man, because he has equal civil rights with all others, has also a right to claim a portion of the world's wealth created by another. Such a doctrine cannot be admitted,

least of all by those who, with the writer, most earnestly desire to see the improvement of the wages-receiving class on a legitimate basis. Inability to create is certainly no reason for claiming what ability has created. The proper field for the philanthropist is in aiding the change from inability to ability; in helping workmen move up in the rank of laborers; in assisting them in the attainment of skill, education, forethought, trustworthiness, and saving habits. As they themselves save and become the owners of capital, they increase the length of the lever by which they may raise their position in life. Wherever the laborer is working, let him collect information about the trade in which he is engaged, let him solicit more responsibility, and just in proportion to his capacity, in the long run, will he find his wages increase, until he himself becomes a manager of the capital of others as well as his own. It is a path open to any man in the United States. Every one welcomes character and intelligence in all occupations. If trades-unions should spend their large reserves in diffusing a better industrial education among their numbers, and in promoting skill and saving, they would be at nobler business than "boycotting" newspapers.

J. LAURENCE LAUGHLIN.